

ABSTRACTAggregates in a presence management system

A presence management system is described whereby  
 connections between watching parties and watched parties in a  
 5 multiple access communications network are managed. When the  
 presence management system receives a contact request from a  
 watching party it determines whether the required watched  
 party is available for contact. The system then provides  
 information about this to the watching party who made the  
 10 request. The presence management system chooses the best mode  
 of communication (e.g. email or fax) taking into account the  
 watched parties preferences and details about the facilities  
 available to the watching party. If, the presence management  
 system informs the watching party that the watched party is  
 15 unavailable, the watching party is able to set up a monitor.  
 In determining whether the required watched party is available  
 for contact, the presence management system uses stored  
 information about the watched party, information about the  
 required connection (e.g. size and type) and also rules. ~~IN~~  
 20 addition, information about events from the multiple access  
 network are used e.g. geographical location of watched party  
 mobile phones. Advantageously, watched parties or watching  
 parties are may be groups or aggregates of individuals.  
~~Aggregates are treated in the same way as individual watched~~  
~~parties or watching parties. For example, a group of~~  
~~individuals with a common interest may form in order that~~

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